

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OECD PARIS 04810

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OECD, ECON
SUBJECT: TIMING OF OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING

REF: OECD PARIS 3264

1. WITH SCHEDULING OF OTHER MAJOR HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS NOW TAKING SHAPE, THE TIME HAS CLEARLY COME FOR THE U.S.G. TO FOCUS ON AND SIGNAL ITS DESIRES CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING. AT INFORMAL LUNCHEON OF OECD AMBASSADORS FEBRUARY 15, THE WORD WAS OUT THAT THE SUMMIT MEETING WILL BE HELD IN SECOND WEEK OF MAY, AND THAT THE CIEC WILL BE SHORTLY AFTERWARD, PROBABLY IN LATE MAY.

2. IN LIGHT OF THIS THE OECD AMBASSADORS EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO SET THE DATES OF THE OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THERE WAS A CONSENSUS IN FAVOR OF HOLDING THE MEETING BEFORE THE SUMMIT, ALTHOUGH A FEW AMBASSADORS FELT THAT A POST SUMMIT MEETING COULD ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE. THERE WAS ALSO A FIRM CONSENSUS HOWEVER THAT WHATEVER DATES WERE SET, THEY SHOULD BE A FUNCTION OF THE TIME WHEN THE APPROPRIATE MINISTERS FROM THE KEY COUNTRIES WERE
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LIKELY TO ATTEND AND WERE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN A USEFUL DISCUSSION OF ISSUES.

3. AMBASSADORS, THEREFORE, AGREED TO QUERY THEIR GOVERNMENTS IMMEDIATELY AS TO THE AVAILABILITY AND PREFERENCES OF THEIR MINISTERS DURING A PERIOD FROM MID-APRIL UP TO AND INCLUDING THE FIRST

WEEK IN MAY AND INFORM THE SYG SO THAT HE COULD SEE THE POSSIBILITIES MORE CLEARLY AND MAKE A PROPOSAL. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TOLD US PRIVATELY AFTERWARD OF HIS DESIRE TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DATES WHICH WOULD BE SUITABLE FOR SECRETARIES VANCE AND BLUMENTHAL SO THAT HE COULD SHAPE HIS PROPOSAL TO THE COUNCIL ACCORDINGLY. SPECIFICALLY WOULD TIMING DURING THE WEEK BEFORE THE SUMMIT BE CONVENIENT, SAY THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, MAY 5-6, OR WOULD THEY BE AVAILABLE FOR AN OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING SOME TIME EARLIER, PRE-SUMABLY MAKING A SEPARATE TRIP FOR THE PURPOSE. (A NUMBER OF AMBASSADORS EXPRESSED A PREFERENCE FOR SOME INTERVAL BETWEEN THE OECD MINISTERIAL AND THE SUMMIT).

COMMENT: THE MISSION HAS ANALYZED THE PROS AND CONS OF VARIOUS POSSIBLE SCENARIOS CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE OECD IN RELATION TO OTHER HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS SCHEDULED DURING THE APRIL TO JUNE PERIOD (SEE REFTEL). AFTER CONSIDERING THOSE OPTIONS CAREFULLY THE MISSION CONCLUDED THAT, ON BALANCE, A PRE-SUMMIT OECD MINISTERIAL MEETING WOULD BE PREFERABLE, MAINLY IN TERMS OF THE CONTRIBUTION AN OECD MEETING COULD MAKE TO PREPARATION OF THE ECONOMIC ISSUES FOR THE SUMMIT AND IN GIVING SOME NON-SUMMIT, NON-EC COUNTRIES A SENSE OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS. WHAT IS ESSENTIAL CONCERNING THE TIMING IS THAT MEETING DATES BE CHOSEN THAT WOULD ENABLE SECRETARIES VANCE AND BLUMENTHAL TO ATTEND. WE ARE CONFIDENT

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OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES WOULD GO ALONG WITH ALMOST ANY DATE WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THEIR ATTENDANCE.

WE HOPE WASHINGTON CAN GIVE US AN EARLY REPLY ON THE MATTER OF DATES.

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